

# MINUTES

## BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS CITY OF LOS ANGELES

**November 12, 2020**

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Library Commissioners was held via teleconference at 11:02 a.m. on the above-written date.

### 1. Roll Call:

<b>Present:</b>	President	<b>Bích Ngọc Cao</b>
	Vice-President	<b>Kathryn Eidmann</b>
	Commissioner	<b>Dale Franzen</b>
	Commissioner	<b>Mai Lassiter</b>
	Commissioner	<b>Josefa Salinas</b>

**Absent:** None

**Also present via teleconference:** City Librarian John F. Szabo, Assistant City Librarian Susan Broman, Deputy City Attorney Basia Jankowski; Library staff and members of the public.

### 2. Opening Remarks: None.

### 3. **Public Comments on Matters Within the Board's Jurisdiction:**

The Board heard twelve comments on Item 5b, five comments on Item 6c, and five general comments.

### 4. **City Librarian's Comments and Announcements:** City Librarian John F. Szabo reported the following:

- **Vote-by-Mail Ballot Boxes** hosted at all 73 LAPL locations collected a total of 418,121 ballots.
- **The Octavia Lab** was awarded the 2020 Community Impact Award from Gensler for the commitment to social value and inclusion in serving its diverse communities.
- This year, the **Friend's Annual City-Wide Symposium** was held via Zoom, coordinated by the Engagement and Outreach department.
- Jené Brown, Principal Librarian and Racial Equity Officer, was congratulated for being elected President of the California Library Association.

## 5. City Librarian's Reports

### Consent Items

#### a. **Acceptance of gifts from the Friends of the Chinatown Library: APPROVED**

It was moved by Commissioner Salinas and seconded by Commissioner Franzen to approve the following resolution. The motion passed with 5 Ayes (Cao, Eidmann, Franzen, Lassiter & Salinas). 0 Noes. Absent: 0:

#### LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2020-36

RESOLVED, that the following gifts received from the Friends of the Chinatown Library be accepted:

\$2,499.38	Value of library materials for the Chinese Language Collection at the Chinatown Branch Library.
\$1,700.00	Value of gift for the benefit of the Chinatown Branch Library's Young Adult Virtual Career Day Programming

FURTHER RESOLVED, that a letter of thanks be sent to the donors expressing the grateful appreciation of the Board of Library Commissioners and staff for their generous gifts.

### Discussion Items

#### **MOTION:**

Board President Cao asked for a motion to table discussion on Item 5b and that it be reconsidered after Item 6c. The motion passed with 5 Ayes (Cao, Eidmann, Franzen, Lassiter & Salinas). 0 Noes. Absent: 0.

*Taken out of order:*

#### b. **Approval of Library Department Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2021-2022: APPROVED AS AMENDED**

City Librarian John F. Szabo recommended approval of the Library's Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year (FY) 2021-2022 in the amount of \$218,190,022 for submission to the Mayor's Office. He provided an overview of all the funding requests contained in the budget, including funding for the new Library Experience Office for one (1) Principal Librarian, one (1) Library Assistant, and eight (8) Social Workers as well as for social service contracts, staff training, office equipment and supplies to implement a broad strategy toward safety and security. It is also requested to earmark funds to set aside while the program is being developed. The other budget packages are for alterations and improvements of facilities, equipment repair and replacement, and funding for increased facilities maintenance and custodial services.

Mr. Szabo stated that the Proposed Budget itemizes the direct and indirect costs, which together comprise the related costs. In FY 2021-22, the Library will pay an estimated total of \$81,010,056 for related costs, which is 37.13 percent of the Library's total Proposed Budget.

### Discussion

Board President Cao asked to agendaize for a future meeting a discussion on the plans for Phase 2 of reopening. In regard to the security budget, she said she was looking for a further cut to make sure they continue moving away from traditional security.

Vice President Eidmann proposed reducing the budget by \$1.5 million in addition to the \$1 million that has already been reduced from the traditional law enforcement component of the Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2021-22.

City Librarian John F. Szabo stated that the proposed budget for LAPD and contract security is \$7.4 million. He noted that traditional services are not only for public facing security, but also for 24/7 security of the Central Library, investigating incidents, responding to alarms at branch libraries, and more.

Commissioner Franzen stated that she would support Vice President Eidmann's proposal, given COVID and the uncertainty of the future, the closure of libraries would result in more savings in security.

Commissioner Salinas expressed concern on how the cuts could impact the ability to staff the Central Library on a 24/7 basis and not having the alternative approaches in place to replace what is currently in place. She said she would like the security needs of each library facility to be considered instead of doing a blanket cut on security across the system.

Commissioner Franzen asked if the funds could be used to do a specific branch by branch report, because it is crucial information the Board needs to make decisions.

It was moved by Vice President Eidmann and seconded by Commissioner Franzen to reduce \$1.5 million from the traditional law enforcement component of the Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2021-22, in addition to the \$1 million deduction already reflected therein. The motion passed with 4 Ayes (Cao, Eidmann, Franzen & Salinas). 0 Noes. Absent: Lassiter.

### LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2020-37 (C-21)

WHEREAS, On November 12, 2020, the Board of Library Commissioners (Board) approved the Fiscal Year 2021-22 Proposed Library Budget in the amount of \$218,190,022 to fund Library services and programs; and

No. 2020-37 (C-21) Cont.

WHEREAS, The Fiscal Year 2021-22 Proposed Library Budget funds the development of a new Strategic Plan and continues outreach and promotion to enhance public awareness of the Library's services and programs, and provides funding for the Library's key initiatives and priorities; and

WHEREAS, The Fiscal Year 2021-22 Proposed Library Budget funds the new Library Experience Office to provide an alternative to traditional law enforcement and outreach to provide information on social service programs for the City's most vulnerable residents:

THEREFORE RESOLVED, That the Board approves for further consideration by the Mayor's Office the Fiscal Year 2021-22 Proposed Library Budget in the amount of \$218,190,022 to fund Library services and programs; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board authorizes the City Librarian to make any necessary technical revisions to the Fiscal Year 2021-22 Proposed Library Budget and advise the Board and the Mayor of any such changes.

**6. c. Report on Multi-Year Strategy  
for a Safe and Welcoming Library**

Assistant City Librarian Susan Broman reported on the Multi-Year Strategy for a Safe and Welcoming Library for Fiscal Years (FY) 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23. She said the strategy consists of four pillars: Evaluation of safety at a community level with community input, consolidation of safety and security under the Library Experience Office, staff training, and facilities alterations and improvements related to safety and security.

Ms. Broman stated that in the first half of the FY 2020-21, the Library has been closed to in-person services, protecting the health and safety of staff and the community by providing contactless services via Library To Go and digital services. She said the Safety & Security Project team has been working on implementing recommendations from the project, including evaluating the security aspects of the Library budget, developing mechanisms for staff input and information-sharing on health and safety topics, researching best practices from other systems, and providing input for the formation of the Library Experience Office.

Ms. Broman pointed out that FY 2021-22 will be a pivotal year to build the infrastructure and capacity of LAPL to manage safety and security from a broader perspective, using a variety of tools to position staff and communities to work together to identify where the greatest needs are present. She said the proposed budget establishes the formation of the Library Experience Office and provides funds for additional personnel as well as funds for contractual services and technology upgrades.

Ms. Broman stated that FY 2022-23 will focus on continuing the evaluation and training practices established during the previous year, continuing the Facilities Master Plan, and facilities and technology upgrades. She also spoke about challenges such as the measures to address the City's fiscal crisis that included a hiring freeze and restrictions on contracting, which may slow implementation of parts of the formation of the Library Experience Office and the ability to negotiate contractual agreements. It will be impossible to evaluate the effectiveness of the Reimagining Safety Initiative pilot programs that cannot begin while libraries are operating contactless and with limited in-person services. She said the Library shares the challenges and opportunities that the City of Los Angeles faces in the coming years and these external factors will impact the demand and availability of resources.

Ms. Broman stated that Library staff will work on reporting progress biannually with the Board's Ad Hoc Committee on Re-envisioning Security, once in the spring and once in the fall.

### **Discussion**

Board President Cao said she would like to see a visual layout be presented on how components of the plan would evolve over the years alongside the budget for the new office.

Commissioner Salinas commented that a lot of these components won't be able to be implemented until FY 21-22, and they will not see any results until after FY 22-23; therefore, there will still be some police presence. She asked if there was a way for the Library to set guidelines and expectations on how security should behave and handle situations within the Library and whether there were protocols to follow as a result of not meeting those expectations.

Ms. Broman replied that the Library is currently doing that with contract security who are working at Library To Go sites, because they are very much part of the teams that work on those locations and interact with staff and patrons. She said the Library will continue to set those expectations on customer first skills.

Commissioner Lassiter stated that it seems that they would have to contract consultants for many services and she wants to make sure that the pool of consultants is very diverse, whether it be for the racial equity plan, strategic plans, or any services. She suggested that some Library funds be used to offer programs on the contract process so diverse companies are able to compete for the contracts.

Vice President Eidmann said she concurred with Commissioner Lassiter and said that the hiring of a consultant who reflects the community is essential. Also, she said that having the many components on a timeline will give the Board a sense of the major milestones. She said the plan passed in the summer had a commitment to gradually reduce the amount spent on traditional law enforcement, which it is not included in this plan, but she would like to see it included on the next update of the plan.

## **7. Commissioners' Comments and Announcements**

- The next Regular Meeting of the Board is scheduled for Thursday, December 10, 2020, at 11:00 a.m. via Teleconference.

8. **Adjournment**: The Meeting was adjourned at 12:43 p.m.

ATTEST:

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Bích Ngọc Cao  
President

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Raquel M. Borden  
Board Executive Assistant